

REMARKS

I. Introduction

This Amendment is accompanied by a separate Submission of Formal Drawings, which should satisfy the Office action's requirement for corrected drawings.

Claims 1, 3, 5, 12, 18, 20-22, and 25 have been amended. Claims 2, 4, 6-11, 13-17, 19, 23, and 24 are also in the case.

Reconsideration of this application in light of the following further remarks is hereby respectfully requested.

II. The Requirement for Corrected Drawings

The Office action requires corrected drawings. A Submission of Formal Drawings is being filed concurrently with this Amendment, which should satisfy this requirement.

III. The Rejections Based on 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-25 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Venkata et al. U.S. Patent 6,854,044 ("Venkata"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A. Claims 1-11

Claim 1 has been amended to make it clearer that applicants' invention can work with special characters "having a plurality of different sizes in terms of how many bytes they include." For example, applicants' FIG. 2 shows that applicants' circuitry can work with special characters of size A1A2 (on the left in FIG. 2) or with special characters of size A1A1A2A2 (on the right in FIG. 2). Paragraph [0027] of applicants' specification generalizes this further by stating that the special characters can be of the form N(A1)N(A2), where N is greater than zero (and giving

yet another specific example where N is 3 and the special character is A1A1A1A2A2A2).

Venkata does not mention using special characters that can include different numbers of bytes. Venkata therefore does not need and does not show "a special character selection input ..." as specified by applicants in claim 1. The only control input to receiver circuitry 20 that Venkata shows is ENC_DET input 34. This is only a synchronization enabling signal. It is not a signal that controls selection from among a plurality of different special characters having a plurality of different numbers of bytes.

Venkata also does not need and does not show anything comparable to the "special character status output ..." specified by applicants in claim 1. The two control outputs shown by Venkata (FIG. 2; PATTERN_DETECT 56 and RESYNC 54) indicate only (1) that the synchronization pattern has been detected (this is the PATTERN_DETECT signal), and (2) that there may be a need to do another synchronization (this is the RESYNC signal). Neither of these two control output signals indicates which one of several different special characters of different lengths (in terms of numbers of bytes) was used in the synchronization operations because the possibility of using such different length special characters is not even mentioned by Venkata.

The foregoing demonstrates that at least two elements of applicants' claim 1 are not shown by Venkata. Claim 1 is therefore not anticipated by Venkata and should be allowed. The same is true of claims 2-11, all of which are dependent from claim 1.

B. Claims 12-19

Claim 12 has also been amended to make it clearer that applicants' invention works with any of a plurality of

different special characters having any of a plurality of different lengths in terms of how many bytes they include.

From the above discussion of claim 1, it will be appreciated that Venkata does not show the "special character selection signal ..." specified by applicants in claim 12. It will also be apparent from that earlier discussion that Venkata does not show the "special character status output signal indicative of which one of the special characters was used to align the byte boundaries" as further specified by applicants in claim 12. Claim 12 is therefore not anticipated by Venkata. Claim 12 and its dependent claims 13-19 should accordingly be allowed.

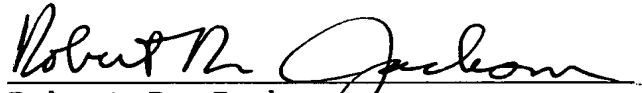
C. Claims 20-25

Claim 20 has also been amended to make it clearer that applicants' invention can work with any of a plurality of different special characters having different lengths in terms of how many bytes they include. Claim 20 specifies that there is a "selection signal" that selects from this plurality of different special characters the special character that is to be used. The above discussion of the other claims establishes that Venkata does not show such a special character selection signal. Claim 20 is therefore not anticipated by Venkata, and this claim and its dependent claims 21-25 should accordingly be allowed.

IV. Conclusion

The foregoing demonstrates that claims 1-25 are allowable. Replacement formal drawings are also being filed. This application is therefore in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are accordingly respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert R. Jackson", is written over a horizontal line.

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